

Chicago Police Department – Consent Decree

**School Resource Officer Policy
Community Input Meetings**

Participants' Comments

Executive Summary

As part of the Chicago Police Department's commitment to strong community partnerships which foster positive interactions between police and the community, especially the youth population, CPD has worked in partnership with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) to assign school resource officers in selected high schools. These officers assigned in schools are committed to working with CPS to enforce the law, protect students, employees, guests, property, and the school community. The recently enacted Consent Decree requires CPD to undergo certain actions to reform the Department, in order to further these positive community interactions.

Per consent decree paragraph #39, CPD is required to develop screening criteria for all officers assigned to work in CPS schools, to ensure they have the qualifications, skills, and abilities necessary to work safely and effectively with students, parents and guardians, and school personnel. CPD is required to consult with CPS while developing these criteria, as well as consider input from CPD members, including officers assigned to work in CPS schools, school personnel, families, students, and community stakeholders.

In paragraph #40 of the consent decree it mandates that CPD will develop a policy that clearly defines the role of officers assigned to work in CPS schools.

The policy will include the following:

- Duties, responsibilities, and appropriate actions of officers assigned to work in CPS schools, including an express prohibition on administering school discipline by officers
- Selection criteria for officers assigned to work in CPS schools
- Initial and refresher training requirement for officers assigned to work in CPS schools
- Collection, analysis, and use of data regarding CPD activities in CPS schools

While developing the policy CPD is also required to solicit input from CPD members, including officers assigned to work in CPS schools, school personnel, families, students, and community stakeholders. To this end CPD, through its Office of Community Policing, facilitated a series of community input sessions, in conjunction with Chicago Public Schools Office of Safety and Security. These sessions were designed to be 'safe spaces' where community members, including CPS students and staff, could provide input and feedback to the Department on the roles and responsibilities of police officers assigned to work in the schools as SROs.

The community input sessions took place over a 4-week period in early Spring of 2019. Most of the sessions took place inside of CPS High Schools where officers are currently assigned as SROs. The schools chosen to host the sessions were geographically spaced throughout the City in all 5 of the CPS school regions in order to gain perspectives and input across a broad and diverse range of CPS personnel, students, and community stakeholders.

School Resource Officer Policy Community Input Sessions

Date	Meeting Location	Participants
Tues., April 9, 2019	Back of the Yards College Prep H.S. 2111 West 47 th Street	High School Principals (4 attendees)
Sat., April 13, 2019	Back of the Yards College Prep H.S. 2111 West 47 th Street	Local Community Based Organizations (38 attendees)
Wed., April 24, 2019	Chicago Vocational High School 2100 East 87 th Street	Students (45) Faculty/Staff (14) (59 total attendees)
Thurs., April 25, 2019	Jones College Prep H.S. 700 South State Street	Students (23) Faculty/Staff (10) (33 total attendees)
Wed., May 1, 2019	Marshall High School 3250 West Adams	Students (18) Faculty/Staff (6) (24 total attendees)
Wed., May 1, 2019	CPD Headquarters 3510 South Michigan Avenue	High School Principals (9 attendees)
Wed. May 1, 2019	CPD Headquarters 3510 South Michigan Avenue	Local School Council (LSC) Representatives and Parents (23 attendees)
Thurs., May 2, 2019	Sullivan High School 6631 North Bosworth	Students (16) Faculty/Staff (9) (25 total attendees)
Thurs., May 2, 2019	Back of the Yards College Prep H.S. 2111 West 47 th Street	Students (30) Faculty/Staff (6) (36 total attendees)
Mon., May 6, 2019	Dunbar Vocational Career Academy 3000 South Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive	Open Community Meeting (28 attendees)

Meeting Participants

CONSTITUENCY GROUP	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Principals	14
Faculty/Staff	47
Students	132
Local School Council Representatives/Parents	23
Community Based Organization Representatives	38
Community Members	28
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS	282

High School Principals

Back of the Yards High School (3)
Chicago Vocational High School
Corliss High School (2)
Curie High School
Disney II Magnet High School
Harper High School
Marshall High School
Whitney Young Magnet High School

Community Based Organizations

Enlace Chicago
We Are Light
Arc of St. Sabina
COFI/Power/PAC
Target Area Group
Communities United
Brighton Park Community Council

CPD Officer Focus Group Sessions

The officers currently assigned to work in schools as SROs, as well as their supervisors, were also able to provide input on the development of the policy governing SROs, as well as the specialized training that would benefit their roles working in the schools. The officers were also weighed in on the roles and responsibilities that they believe SROs should have while assigned to work within CPS schools. The officer input sessions were divided into 2 focus group sessions, both held at CPD headquarters.

Date	Meeting Location	Participants
Wed., March 6, 2019	CPD Headquarters 3510 South Michigan Avenue	School Sergeants (SRO Supervisors)
Mon., May 6, 2019	CPD Headquarters 3510 South Michigan Avenue	School Resource Officers (22 Officers)

Methodology

The Office of Community Policing personnel utilized the *World Café Methodology* format for the community input sessions. This method is a simple, effective, and flexible format for hosting group dialogue, designed to create a 'safe environment' to share ideas in order to avoid large 'group think' peer pressures and allow for more thought-provoking individual responses.

The following five components comprised this basic meeting style:

- 1) *Creating an Inviting Setting*: The Office of Community Policing created a "special" environment, modeled after a small café (i.e. small tables of 5-10 seats, large newsprint paper, colored markers and post it notes, etc.) where the conversations would take place.
- 2) *Welcome and Introduction*: The host began with a warm welcome and an introduction to the World Café process, setting the context, sharing the Café Etiquette, and putting participants at ease.

3) *Small Group Discussions*: The process began with the participants deciding on the first of three or more twenty-minute small group conversations taking place at each small table. At the end of the twenty minutes, each member of the group was invited to move to a different table with a new focus area topic. They may or may not choose to leave one table for the next. Their next table facilitator welcomes the new group and briefly fills them in on what happened in the previous group discussion.

4) *Questions*: Each round is presented with a **question** specially crafted for the specific focus area and desired purpose of the small group discussion. The same questions were used for each small group discussion around that focus area.

5) *Harvest*: After the rounds of small group discussions individuals were invited to share insights and other results from their conversations with the rest of the reassembled large group. These results were reflected visually in a variety of ways, including the large news print sheets that group members wrote their thoughts on.

Participants chose from the following discussion topics:

- SRO Selection Criteria
- SRO Training
- SRO Roles and Responsibilities
- SRO Assignments

SRO Selection Criteria

How would you make your choice of school resource officers?

- Familiar with and supportive of restorative justice practices
- Respectful of the community
- Mindful of mental health issues and needs of students
- Officers that have a background with children
- Clean background, no past disciplinary issues
- Has been actively engaged with kids
- Someone working in the community at least 5 years
- Live or work in the community assigned
- Someone who wants to work with kids
- Officers that have been appropriately trained
- Someone who could build relationships with kids
- Able to approach kids in a developmentally appropriate manner
- Able to control themselves under pressure
- Officers should present reasons why they want to be assigned as SRO
- Friendly and non-prejudiced
- Aware of their own biases

- Trained in implicit bias
- Can show compassion and empathy
- Officers with child psychology background
- Willing to build relationships within the school community/building
- Need officers with skills other than arresting people
- Set the tone to be respectful
- Police background should be considered
- Know how to work with children
- Students should be involved in selection process
- Prior community policing (CAPS) skills
- Should reflect school demographics
- Previous experience coaching kids in sports activities
- Officers should “look like” the students in the schools (race/ethnicity)
- Officers should have a requirement for community service
- Officers that are alumnus of the school should be selected
- Should have children of their own to understand how to deal with youth
- Need a balanced male to female ratio

What type of officer would you want assigned to your school?

- A cool officer that can reach students on any level
- Outspoken and can adapt to students
- Keeping it real with spirit
- An experienced officer
- Need male and female officers (girls don’t feel comfortable with just male officers in the building)
- Someone who treats everyone equally
- Not afraid but respectful
- Male officers are too aggressive

What type of prior experience should SROs have to work with young people?

- Mental health professionals should be a priority
- Trauma informed care
- Prior experience with kids
- Bilingual
- Mentors in the private sector
- Social worker
- Posses a higher form of discretion
- Negotiations skills

What type of communication skills should SROs have? What does that look like?

- Empathetic listening
- Bilingual

SRO Training

What type of training should SROs have?

- Development of the youth mind/brain
- Child psychology
- Dealing with students in crisis
- Problem solving
- De-escalation techniques
- CPS policies and procedures (code of conduct)
- Mental health training
- Trauma training
- Community resources (shelters, food banks, etc.)
- Conflict resolution
- Restorative Justice
- Sensitivity training
- Ability to communicate with children
- Developmental disabilities
- New issues that arise
- Community organizing
- Cultural sensitivity
- Behavioral intervention
- Inclusive facilitating
- Consensus building
- Peace circle training
- Fight or flight reaction training
- How to control situations verbally
- How to socialize more
- How to learn from body language
- Anger management
- Suicide awareness
- Response to active shooter
- Undocumented students (awareness)
- Communication and relationship building
- CPS Student Code of Conduct
- People skills/soft skills
- Non-verbal communications
- Language barrier skills
- Grief counseling
- School history/community issues
- Legal rights of students
- Basic technology

- Gender inclusiveness
- School to prison pipeline
- Safe Passage Program

What type of background or qualities would you like for an SRO to have?

- Officer bios should be considered
- Member of the community where assigned
- Someone willing to listen and be involved
- Youth involvement (certification or degree)
- CIT training (youth)
- Bilingual
- Teaching background
- "Art of conversation"
- Be aware of what kids are interested in
- Being patient
- Thorough background check
- Whether the officer has ever killed someone
- Officer wellness
- Administration should have a larger role in selecting officers for the school
- Officers should be required to participate in peace circles, restorative justice, etc.
- There should be community involvement in the selection process
- Eye contact, communication skills
- Show respect
- Keep calm and listen
- SROs should be certified

Roles and Responsibilities

What do you think the SROs' responsibilities should be?

- Engage with students only when there is an imminent threat
- Only to affect arrest or resolve an issue
- They should not carry weapons inside the schools
- Break up fights
- Officers should build relationships with all students
- Anything bigger than security can handle
- Should come if more security is needed
- When situation is out of control
- Keep youth safe from active shooter
- Should respond when a student breaks the law
- Officers should do nothing
- Prevent incidents and crime from happening

- De-escalate situations so they don't become more serious
- Protect the students and staff
- Have monthly meetings with staff so they understand situations and can come up with solutions
- Be a part of the team
- Mentoring relationships

When should SROs be called to schools or classrooms?

- SROs should not facilitate restorative justice
- Imminent threat
- Life threatening situations
- Only when force is being used
- When weapons are involved
- Critical incidents
- If a teacher is threatened
- If a teacher is battered
- If security can't handle the situation and it escalates

At what point do you think SROs should engage in disruptive incidents?

- Officers should not touch students in a rough way
- Principals, parents, and officers should work together
- Only after a parent has been notified of an incident
- Engage immediately, without hands on
- Only when a crime has occurred, or in an emergency
- Schools can handle narcotic and battery crimes
- Break up fights
- When students need help
- When violence occurs
- Threats to teachers or students
- Threats to shoot up the school
- Should have school radios to monitor situations and determine severity of an incident
- In imminent danger
- Be present as a more preventative measure (deterrent)

Assignments

If you were able to assign an SRO to a job at the school, what would the job be?

- Patrolling around the school
- Be visible throughout the day
- Develop relationships between the officers and students
- No need for SROs in the schools

- There is no role for SROs in schools
- Security can handle any issues that need to be addressed
- Play basketball with the students to build relationships
- Connect to identify problems
- Team building exercises
- Monitor all floors of the building
- Be around when there are no problems (before issues arise)
- Build a bond with students
- Create positive interaction opportunities (3 times a year)
- Officers should share their experiences with students to make them aware of their job
- CPS security needs to be more involved in meetings with students and staff
- Eat lunch in the cafeteria with students to develop better relationships
- Use Google Hangout for group communications
- Communicate with parents along the school route (no sitting in cars)

Should SROs be assigned to fixed or mobile posts? If so, where should they be?

- Mobile posts
- The SROs should be on stand-by until needed
- Patrolling around the schools
- Be visible, create relationship with students and officers
- They should be walking around

What hours should SROs be in the school building?

- From before students arrive until after dismissal
- After lunch
- Flexible schedule
- 8am – 4pm
- 10am – 6pm
- At arrival and dismissal time
- Stagger hours of officers for longer coverage throughout the day and after school
- Lunch periods
- 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after the first and last periods of the day
- There's too much inconsistency. There doesn't appear to be a set start and end time

What do you think the SROs should be doing when at the schools?

- Attend the LSC meetings
- Should be officer friendly
- Show their faces and create relationships
- Become familiar with the community
- SROs should separate students during large fights, but not arrest them
- SROs should calm situations down (de-escalate)
- Arrest should be a last resort

- Create non-violent safe spaces
- Don't arrest students in front of their peers
- Officer friendly
- Build relationships with students
- Walk around the school and check on the students in class
- Walk around and talk to students during lunch
- Earn the trust of the students
- Speak to the youth first (be cordial)
- Participate in activities such as pep rally and other school events
- Patrolling during after school events would make students feel safe
- Having more personal relationships with youth and staff
- Check in every morning for 15 minutes with the school team (office/security)
- Be more engaging with students
- Less discipline involvement
- Engage with student government (student council)
- Engage with incoming students
- Create SRO focus group (voluntary participation by students)

Should SROs be included or participate in after school programs?

- Yes
- No, no need for them during after school hours
- No. Those resources should be used for other places

Memorandum of Understanding

CPD is committed to continue to work with CPS leadership to ensure that a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is adopted by both CPD and CPS. The MOU will define several important aspects of the SROs assigned to CPS schools, including the following:

1. The duties, responsibilities, and appropriate actions of officers assigned as SROs;
2. Selection criteria for officers assigned as SROs;
3. The initial and refresher training requirements for officers assigned as SROs;
4. The collection, analysis, and use of data regarding CPD activities in CPS schools.

In developing the policies noted above for SROs, CPD will also evaluate input from CPD members, officers assigned as SROs, school personnel, families, students, and community stakeholders.

Recommendations received for the MOU:

- Include a clear accountability process when officers do not follow the agreement
- Have school officers separated from other officers
- Keep annual data

- Expand training for competency working with young people
- Parent participation in selection process
- Incorporate Shriver Center for Poverty Law report
- Eliminate the ability for officers to remove students from school without parent/guardian or restorative justice advocate notification
- Mandatory implicit bias training
- Training on identifying children with special needs (IEP, ADHD, etc.)
- Annual timeline to review MOU
- Supervision of SROs across all districts
- Involve parents and principals in SRO evaluation process
- Place the SRO on the school web site for community stakeholders
- There should be no cops in schools
 - Creates an initial traumatic environment
 - Re-traumatizes students on a daily basis
 - Most shootings occur outside of school, so officers should be outside
 - Deters the goals of the schools
 - Need more counselors, less cops
 - Money could be used for teacher training
- CPS (principals) have been placing officers in bad situations due to not knowing correct policies
- People want a better understanding of the expectations of what the SRO is supposed to do (they want to see the agreement)
- Policy must have safeguards against abuse

General comments and concerns

- Officers should not have facilitated the discussions, it undermines the process
- Need Neutral facilitators
- Language interpreters needed in community meetings
- Need to ensure student input, didn't see any students at the meeting
- Facilitators should not have an opinion in support or against a person's suggestion
- Meeting were very helpful and productive
- Would love to see more student involvement
- No cops in schools!!
- If you treat a student like a criminal, they will be a criminal
- Officers should not stare at students in an intimidating manner, or make assumptions and make a situation more than what it is
- Hold meetings at the beginning of the school year and quarterly
- Be empathetic
- Concerns over police impersonators entering the school with fake uniforms
- Officers returning to duty from shooting incidents should not be allowed to come into the schools

- Officers should not be returning from extended medical leave
- SROs should wear body cameras
- Officers should have a different uniform than beat officers on the street (polo shirt/khaki pants)
- Officers should work closely with dean/counselors
- Attend open house
- Please bring back CAPS, it worked!
- Officers should work with teachers to better understand how to deal with students
- Officer training should be held quarterly
- Do not use derogatory language to describe students ("animals" or "you people")
- CPD leadership should be more responsive to principal request/complaints about officers at their schools
- Concerns about the gang data base connecting immigrants to immigration customs enforcement (ICE)
- CPS Safe Passage workers should be in contact/coordination with roving school patrol cars
- Need officers in some elementary schools based on incidents that have occurred
- Are Principals and LSC's the proper individuals to determine if SROs are needed at their school? What are their qualifications to make such an important assessment? Are they biased for/against police involvement in schools?
- Officers should not harass students that they "perceive" to be bad kids
- Officers are unsure of what their roles are and need better direction
- Officers have been highly aggressive and need a greater level of restraint and patience
- Sergeant and Commander have been very helpful
- Officers take extended lunch breaks with little to no accountability
- Lack of communication has resulted in a combative and uncomfortable situation
- Who is responsible for engaging students in incidents occurring near the school but not on school property, CPD or CPS security? (1 – 2 blocks away)
- Principals should be involved in the assessment/evaluation of SROs annually